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without seeing any one, even of his own family.

"Gertrude expressed her gratitude to his Majesty for the title of Countess which he had been pleased to bestow upon her; and the Queen begged of him to join the society. The King, however, who was engaged in feeding his little dogs with the thinnest possible slices of bread and butter, each mouthful bestowd with an exclamation, such as '*Tiens, ma mignonne! manges donc, mon petit toutou! Ah! mon pauvre petit chéri, tu as trop mangé!*' seemed indisposed to relinquish his intellectual occupation; but upon a second glance at Gertrude, he promised to look in in the course of the evening, and the ladies took their leave of his Majesty, and returned to the party."

Soon after this the king of Navarre returns from his hunting party, and Gertrude discovers to her astonishment and dismay, that he is the man who, under the name of the Duke of Beaumont, had visited her solitary castle, and won her heart. The story of Preciosa, a Spanish lady, whom also Henry had jilted, is then related at considerable length: this lady forms an intimate friendship with Gertrude, and on leaving court to retire to a convent, writes her the following letter:

"Forgive me, dearest Gertrude, if, by departing without bidding you adieu, I adopt the only method by which I can avoid taking advantage of your generous offer. I go with a breaking heart, and thoughts yet unweaned from this wretched world. I leave but two behind me in whose fate I am interested, Henry of Navarre and yourself. For him I fear not: first, because he is a man; and secondly, because he is of a happy disposition, and one in whom sorrow passes lightly over, leaving but a gentle and easily-effaced impression. I leave him in the midst of pleasures; and if dangers lurk beneath them, he is a man, he can defend himself. Men are subject to die violent deaths; but they almost have it in their power to shape the destiny of their lives. My last prayer to Heaven shall be for him. Though he has disenchanted my existence, and made my life but a dreary journey to the grave; though but for him I might have lived honoured and beloved, and died respected, and in peace, yet I forgive him. Alas! does he think, do men think, that the hearts of women are but toys to trifle with? or haply, do they believe them formed of such hard material that they will not break? They know not—care not. It is not then of men I speak; it is not for Henry of Navarre I tremble. Gertrude, it is for you. You are a woman,—therefore destined from your cradle to misery. You have a heart, therefore you will feel that misery.—Yes—from the cradle to the grave, woman's life is but a chain of sorrow; and if some bright flowers embellish her early days—if some vivid joys are thrown around her path in the morning of life, how bitterly do they contrast with her future years! How often do the sorrows of her whole existence arise from those very hours of pleasure! brief—fleeting—dangerous. Oh! who would grieve for the death of an infant daughter! Who would not rather rejoice that she did not grow up to be a woman; an unprotected, deserted, unpitied woman? Methinks, if any of our sex are happy, it can only arise from two causes; from a hardened heart, or an insensible one. Why are we not taught this by our instructors? Why are we not told that we are victims, and given time to prepare

for our fate? Why are we led into the world as goddesses, decked with flowers, radiant with the smiles of anticipated joys, surrounded by flattering words? It is a cruel deception: we are forced to marry those we hate, and thus we are chained to sorrow through life; or worse than this, we marry those we love, and in a short period we are repaid by ingratitude and neglect. We lead a life of resignation, and try to appear contented, and pass our lives like statues, with hearts of stone, or of brass; or we catch at a passing pleasure, and try to deaden our grief, and we are defamed, insulted, vilified; or we sin, and our portion is—remorse, desertion, and despair.

"As I write, my grief, which I thought at its height, increases. I know not why I write; but that sorrow, like a river, long pent up, overflows its banks, and gushes forth in torrents. I enter the cloister—I take the veil: but what a heart will beat beneath the habit of the nun! How can I pronounce my vows, till my mind is weaned from the things of time? Yet the society of the holy-minded may produce holy thoughts.

"Lost as I am, I venture to advise you: for the present, remain where you are; see the King of Navarre as usual. When you look on him, gay and contented, think of me. Endeavour to accustom yourself to his presence. Among those who have offered you their hearts and fortunes, there are many worthy of you. But fate will have its way; and if you are destined to be happy, you can but try to meet the blow as nobly as you can; and endeavour at least to retain the consolation of reflecting that you are not the cause of your own misfortunes. Adieu! the streets are beginning to give signs of life. A happy artisan passes by, singing to his morning work. A little ragged boy gazes on the Louvre with envying eyes, thinking perchance that sorrow may not enter those walls. For the last time, I see the sun shining upon Paris. Scenes of short-lived pleasure, and of ever-during woe, adieu!—All are at rest within the palace. When they waken, there is but one who will enquire for me. Oh! that there were some short yet sinless method of freeing oneself from the burden of life! But, for a guilty soul to venture, unbidden, into his presence, whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity!—No! fear not, Gertrude. I trust to Heaven's mercy alone for a speedy deliverance. Adieu, adieu."

The end is, that Gertrude dies on witnessing the ceremony of Preciosa taking the veil. There is little, as may easily be seen, in the plot of the story, but the interest is well kept up by liveliness of narrative and variety of incident. The historical portraits are pretty accurately given. Sometimes indeed, as in the description of the reception of the king of Poland on his journey to his dominions, by the elector Palatine, we could have wished our fair author had adhered to the simplicity of Brantome and De Thou, instead of following the gratuitous amplifications of Mongez and Browning, but this, perhaps, were too much to expect from a novelist. As the character of the Queen-mother (Catharine de Medicis) forms so prominent a feature in this work, we are tempted to transcribe the following brief summary of it, which we remember struck us forcibly in reading over DAVILA, as a singular proof of truth and honesty in a writer who, from his position, was naturally and necessarily very reluctant to give any testimony that

could militate against her memory and reputation. *Fu tenuta di fede fallacissima, avida, o più tosto sprezzante del sangue humano più assai de quello che alla tenerezza del sesso femminile si convenga: et apparve in molte occasioni, che nel conseguire i suoi fini, quantunque buoni, stimasse honesti quei mezzi, che gli parevano utili al suo disegno, ancorchè per se medesimi fossero veramente iniqui o perfidiosi.*

Eldred of Erin; a Poem. By Charles Doyne Sillery, Author of *Vallery*, or the *Citadel of the Lake*.—Edinburgh, Constable and Co.; and Hurst and Chance, London.

THE first two books of *Eldred*, the only ones contained in this little volume, the author informs us are merely experimental. The reception of these, he says, will determine whether he is to proceed further with the poem, or leave his hero where he found him, wrapt in his own solitary contemplations, amid the wild sublimities of the Emerald Isle. Mr. Sillery, we should apprise our readers, is himself an Irishman; and though he has visited foreign parts, and stored his fancy with a copious store of eastern imagery, he is still abundantly youthful and Irish in his taste and judgment. But as our readers doubtless would feel gratified to be introduced to so desirable an acquaintance, they will permit us to do them that delicate honour through the medium of a bit of newspaper eloquence, which we take the liberty of transcribing from the *Edinburgh Observer*:—"A more enthusiastic child of song than Charles Doyne Sillery, has rarely appeared on this terraqueous globe.—Like Anacreon Moore, his wit flashes in incessant coruscations. Like the same illustrious bard, he sings his own songs, and dashes even his prose with poetical ornamens. He possesses, moreover, the astronomical enthusiasm of a Newton, the philosophic vein of a Brown, and the mechanical skill of a Watt. About the ordinary size, and exceedingly slender in figure; we never look upon his eye, gleaming with intellectual fire, but we think of the

'—mighty soul, that, working out its way,
Freteth the puny body to decay.'

Mr. Sillery is still very, very young; yet he has visited, not only mentally, but bodily, the uttermost parts of the earth. He has been rocked by the tropic billows—has seen the tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte—doubled the cape of storms—gazed on the palmy headlands of Hindostan, and learnt to eat with chopsticks in China."

Throughout the preface to *Eldred*, there is a somewhat suspicious anxiety observable to anticipate and repel the charge of plagiarism; and especially any insinuation of having followed or imitated Lord Byron. Our readers will perhaps be better able to guess at the motives of this violent disclaimer, when they have read the three following stanzas, taken from different parts of the work:—

xv.
"Tis sweet to walk by the deep ocean's roar,
When foam and sunshine crisp the emerald billows:
'Tis sweet to wander through the forest hoar,
Embowered, with singing birds, mid clustering willows:—
Sweet 'tis to rove when autumn's gold-leaf yellows
Lawns, cornfields, groves; all Nature's wide domes
nions
When Flora laughs, and rich Pomona mellows.—
But sweeter far than all those earthly minions,
To lift the soul to Heaven on Contemplation's pinions."

XX.

"To stand alone upon the midnight deck :
To gaze around upon the cold, calm sea ;
Where not a rock, nor bark, nor spar, nor speck,
Of aught save Ocean blue, is seen to be :—
Forgotten—friendless—fatherless—and free
As the poor fettered Indian slave—all good,
All learning, all religion scorned to see—
As the bark's prow spurns back the foaming flood—
Thus—thus to stand alone—Oh ! this is Solitude !

XXXIX.

"I love to see the Sun in glory rise,
When heaven's all bright and beautiful and blue :
I love to see the pale Moon walk the skies,
When all the lamps of night are shining through :
I love the laughing landscape's verdant view :
The song of birds ; the rush of streams and air :
And Womankind ! I dearly love thee too :—
But sweeter far than thou, than all that's fair,
To stand apart and gaze on Innocence at prayer !

If we be asked is all, or any of this, in our opinion like Lord Byron, we answer no, not in the least ; but it is mighty like a bad imitation of him for all that.

On the whole, there is a good deal to praise in Mr. Sillery's Eldred ; but there is also not a little to condemn. Sometimes we find ourselves lost in "a great wood of words on this side and on that," and metaphors and images the most strained and incongruous, are scattered with no unsparing hand ; nathless, in a more sober vein, and following the Horatian precept of keeping his verses over, (we are afraid to say how many years, but Mr. Sillery knows the number of the muses,) and submitting them to judicious pruning and revision, we have no doubt that he is capable of producing a poem really worthy of this "Beautiful Isle of poetry and tears."

Let our readers judge from the following specimens :—

LI.

"So deemed the Solitary, as the shades
Of Evening stole along the mountains blue ;
And all the laughing flowers and bright green blades,
Of every fairy-form, of every hue,
Closed their pure buds, and dreamt in diamond dew :
Slowly, and lone, he bent his homeward way,
Round yon dark mountain, wildly towering through
The billowy fogs belting its bosom gray :
And as he disappeared, mild Echo heard him say,—

LIX.

"I love the night ! the deep and dark blue night !
When countless worlds are sprinkled o'er the skies ;
When lovely Luna sits enthroned in light,
And heaven looks on me with ten thousand eyes :
To hear the waters murmuring, and the sighs
Of love-lorn Zephyrus wandering through the woods :
To walk surrounded by a Paradise
Of glory, issuing in prismatic floods
From all the ethereal heavens, to all earth's solitudes !

LIII.

"Peace to the Bard ! he slumbers with the world
All silently—the curtains of the west
Their gorgeous folds of pink and gold have furl'd :
The Babe, forgetful of her tears, doth rest ;
Rocked, by the beating of her mother's breast,
Into Oblivion's Paradise.—On high
The pale-worn Moon displays her burnished crest,
Wandering in silence through the starry sky ;
While, wan with shadowy light, the slumbering valleys lie.

LIV.

"Here have I paused, and pondered deeply ; till
I had forgot'n the world, and all its jars ;
And my soul—like the music of the rill,
That sweetly rises from the mountain spars—
Soared, and was lost amid the maze of stars !
That labyrinth of philosophy above—
But bounds are set, beyond whose adamant bars
No mortal thought hath ris'n, nor e'er shall rove,
Till freed from darkling dust it springs through light and love !

LV.

"To pause—to ponder—to be wrapt and lost
In thought intense ; in meditation deep—
This none can rob me of—'tis mine ! and most
In the still midnight, when the heavens do sweep
O'er the hush'd nations, bless'd with balmy sleep :
Then the wide soul expands within her cell,
(Writhing and rising till the heart doth leap,
And the brow burns,)—like some huge swinging bell,
Vibrating, mid the clouds, between high Heaven and Hell.

LVI.

"Man doth not know, nor can I tell mankind,
The tides of thrilling rapture that now roll,
Ev'n like a boundless ocean, through my mind ;
As if Heaven's inspiration fired my soul—
The soul ! my God, how infinite ! the whole
Of those bright orbs my dazzled eyes behold :—
Yon moon, yon stars thick sown from pole to pole :
Globes above globes, are through its regions roll'd ;
And still there's room for worlds which numbers never told !

LVII.

"Room too for thought !—There Presy, divine,
Hath an unutterable Heaven, of bliss ;
Imagination, her rich golden mine !
And meditation, her sublime abyss
Of boundless beauty, light and loveliness !
Then let me meditate ! while all around
Is slumber—'Tis in such a night as this
That I love most to ponder, and to sound
The ocean of my soul, unfathomably profound.

LVIII.

"Tell me, ye midnight voices, where are they ;
They who began life's pilgrimage with me ?
Some toil in foreign lands far, far away,
Beyond the billows of the boundless sea :
Others, alas ! are in eternity !
But all are severed—long forgotten—fled
Like wintry leaves wind-scattered o'er the lea—
Time walked between with swift and silent tread,
Making alike unknown the living and the dead.

LIX.

"And yet mid them there smiled my earliest friends,
The sharers of my innocence and joy :—
Ah ! how the rush of years to manhood, tends
Our pure, perfect pleasures to destroy !
Who would not wish again to be a boy ?
To tread the fields with light and bounding heart ;
When no rough blasts, no hardships could annoy :
Our home, our Heaven—simplicity our art ;
When every various scene new rapture could impart.

LX.

"Ah me ! and those bright sunny days are gone ;
Their very memory warms my weary soul :
Yet can they charm, though age apace comes on,
To cut, "the thread," and "break the golden bowl."
Yes, years must change, and fleeting seasons roll ;
And I fall off, as I had never been !
Hurried along to lingering life's last goal :
Yet shall I ne'er forget those days serene,
The lovely long lost hours mine infancy hath seen."

The succession of the seasons is thus described :—

XXXX.

"First comes sweet Spring in all her balmy mildness,
Adorned with leafy sprigs and fairy flowers :—
Shoots the young vivid verdure in its wildness ;
Flush the fresh fields, and bud the blooming bowers,
Gem'd with soft dews, imperl'd with tender showers.—
Up mounts the lark to meet the merry morning :
While silvery music leads the gentle hours ;
And the bright bow, a soft shower's sunny warning,
Laughs mid the fleeting clouds yon glittering vale adorning !

XXXVI.

"Then comes bright Summer, beautiful and blue ;
All sunshine, roses, vegetable blooms :
The crystal rills their warbling ways pursue ;
Bleat the white flocks among the golden brooms.
A dazzling deluge all the world illumines ;
Droop the parch'd flowers on Nature's panting breast ;
Till the black tempest spreads his pitchy plumes,
Then ragged lightnings tear the mountain's crest,
And the dread thunder rolls sublime along the west !

XXXVII.

"Follows rich Autumn, crowned with golden corn ;
Sweet scents the withered grass along the way :
The yellow fields laugh in the saffron morn ;
And merry reapers, ranged in fair array,
Ply the sharp sickle all the sultry day—
Pomona redds on the bending boughs—
Myriads of wing'd gems in the sunbeams play—
From clustering vines the empurpled torrent flows,
And through the falling leaves the whistling south-wind blows.

XXXVIII.

"Last comes stern Winter robed in feery snow—
Through the calm air the whitening flakes descend :
Broad beams red Phœbus mid the vapours low ;
While, from the leafless forest boughs depend
Cold glassy icicles, and far extend
The sparkling fields—the lake's a crystal plain !
Thick sown with stars the heavens of midnight bend :
When lo ! the white hills melt with genial rain ;
Laughs the ascending sun, and Spring returns again !"

We have a grave quiet Jonathan Oldbuck like sort of regard for womankind ourselves,

but Mr. Sillery, like all your poetry talkes talkes sort of people, runs away with the joke ; only listen to the foolish young man :—

XLIX.

"Who hath not loved fair woman ?—Is there one,
Whose heart is formed of tender, breathing mould,
Between the poles, beneath the blessed sun,
Could look on her all callously and cold ?
No ! no !—Nor power, nor genius, rank, nor gold,
Can purchase her sweet love : it stands alone,
A heaven on earth !—free—fearless—uncontroll'd !
How bless'd is he, who all to guile unknown,
Can call her gentle heart of innocence—his own.

L.

"Oh ! ecstasy of admiration !—Earth !
With womankind how beautiful thou art !
In wo or weal, in mourning or in mirth ;
In every climate and in every part :
Ye gentle charmers of Man's ruder heart !
What were the world without you ?—what this life ?
All dark—all drear—all desolate—a mart
Of helpless, hopeless agony and strife :
Now all so beautiful, with Mother !—Sister !—Wife !

LI.

"Yes ; womankind ! I love thee, with a soul
Deeply devoted—with a pleasing, pure,
And perfect passion that hath all control
O'er this frail heart—a love that will endure,
As firm, as fixed, as faithful, fervent, sure,
As ever fancy formed, or minstrel sung !
What, though earth's clouds of sorrow may obscure
The bright blue skies, that innocence had hung
O'er thy heart's early life, so passionate, pure and young ?

LII.

"Its beauty beams through all !—go ask the man
Who lay before thee on the couch of death,
When life's slow current through his hot veins ran,
And his sunk soul seemed fleeing with each breath :
Hear what the female-tended captive saith ;
The stranger in a foreign land—the foe—
The very outcast, who hath proved her faith :—
And they will tell thee wheresoe'er you go,
That gentle Womankind is all our Heaven below !

LIII.

"Then, Eldred loved !—the lady of his love
Was all to him—her golden flowing hair ;
Her deep, blue eyes, like dewy orbs above ;
Her lineaments, so exquisitely fair !
Her brow serene—the heaven of sweetness there !
Her form so slender, delicate and light !
Her mild deportment, and her gentle air ;
Were all so lovely in young Eldred's sight,
That she alone seemed good, and beautiful and bright !

LIV.

"Oh ! they would look into each other's eyes,
And read each other's souls ; as ye, above,
Will trace the stars that gem the clear blue skies :
And they would breathe each others breath—and love
To hear their hearts in rapturous fondness move !
Such hours were not for eloquence—a sigh—
A look—a breath itself, would deeply prove
Their souls' pure passion—thus the hours did fly :
All earth was lovely then—all Nature ecstasy !

LV.

"Look on the desert flower !—how beauteous, there,
It buds and blooms, and flourishes and dies !
Pencilled by Flora, delicately fair—
Like evening's soft beams scattered o'er the skies—
Behold !—admire !—consider—ponder—prize—
Poor fool !—then see it wither, fall and rot !
So fades the flower from Eldred's Paradise ;
So did his loved one perish !—mark the spot
Where that fair being sleeps, by the cold world forgot !"

There is no story, but that may come hereafter ; meanwhile we have the pleasure to inform the reader, on the authority of the author, that these two books consist of a series of contemplations, in which the chief object is "to blend religion with reflection—piety with pleasure." Certainly if calling Lord, Lord, would carry a man to heaven, Mr. Sillery would be very secure of a place ; but we confess we think the too frequent and familiar use of the name of the Most High, no inconsiderable blemish in the poem ; and though it is not meant profanely, any more than in the prayers of methodists, and other enthusiasts of coarse minds and heated imaginations, the effect is yet painful and offensive in no slight degree, to minds of more delicate structure and purer taste.